

Rubella

Agent: Rubella virus

Mode of Transmission: Person-to-person transmission through contact with nose and throat secretions from infected people. The virus may also be transmitted from mother to child during pregnancy, causing congenital rubella syndrome (CRS) in the infant.

Signs/Symptoms: Fever and rash, with frequent occurrences of joint pain, arthritis, and swelling of the lymph nodes.

Prevention: Vaccination, preferably administered as MMR vaccine, should begin at 12 months of age.

Other Important Information: In 2004, rubella was declared to be no longer endemic in the United States, although a small number of cases continue to be imported.

No cases of rubella were reported in Virginia during 2013. The most recent Virginia cases occurred in 2010 in two unvaccinated individuals. Prior to these cases, the last reported case occurred in 2001. Nine cases of rubella were reported in the United States in 2013; this is consistent with the previous five-year U.S. average of 8 cases per year.

Although rubella has been eliminated in the United States, it continues to be endemic in many parts of the world. An estimated 110,000 babies are born with CRS every year. As Virginia is host to large numbers of international visitors and thousands of residents returning from international travel, it is important to maintain high vaccination rates and ensure vaccination for those traveling abroad.